

VZCZCXYZ0021
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #0345/01 0441408
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 131408Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3464
INFO RHMFIUU/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//
RULGPUA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000345

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,
WHA/EPSC
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAQ](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN, GLOBAL OUTRAGE OVER
MUHAMMAD CARTOONS, HAITI ELECTIONS; BUENOS AIRES
02/08/06

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Iranian crisis and its global repercussions continue to garner media attention, followed by the international 'furor' over Muhammad's cartoons, which may 'snowball' and the hectic elections in Haiti, marred by violent incidents and disorganization.

12. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "Incidents and High Participation in Haiti"

Center-right, daily-of-record "La Nacion" says (02/08) "Despite the enormous security operation implemented by the 9,500 members of the UN peace mission, Haitian elections experienced serious organizational flaws, with major delays in opening polling stations, and several acts of violence, which left behind four casualties and several wounded.

"Nevertheless, the most ominous predictions of armed attacks against voters, as occurred in Haiti's previous elections, didn't materialize, and UN and Provisional Electoral Council members were pleased with the broad participation of the citizenry...."

- "Necessary and Sufficient"

Pablo Biffi, centrist and leading "Clarín" international columnist, writes (02/08) "Since the dark downfall of Aristide in 2004, the international community has urged for institutional normalization. In order to 'pacify' the country and lead it to an election process, the UN invested millions of dollars to send a military and police contingent of 10,000 men, among them 500 Argentines. Very little of that effort is perceived by its extremely poor population. Undoubtedly, a democratically elected government is necessary. But, if Haiti doesn't receive urgent financial aid, invests in education, health, infrastructure and creates jobs that will enable the people to come out of the pitiful economic situation they suffer, troops and - less still - a legitimate government, won't help."

- "NATO Venue Attacked in Afghanistan Due to Cartoons"

Center-right, daily-of-record "La Nacion" says (02/08) "The conflict following the publication of Muhammad's cartoons by the European press seemed to reach a

global dimension after the Fundamentalist Taliban militia in Afghanistan called the Islamic world to a 'jihad' and three people died in that country during an attack against one of NATO's peace forces.

"All 'foreign invaders' are targeted by the Taliban, said Taliban spokesperson Kari Ahmadi, even though he warned that the attacks were specially aimed at Danish troops.

"While mass protests continued, spreading all over Muslim countries, Denmark's Prime Minister... Anders Rasmussen warned that the controversy had turned into 'an international crisis.'

".... Two days after infuriated Muslim protesters set the Danish Consulate in Beirut on fire and tried to do the same with the Argentine Embassy, our consul in Lebanon, Guillermo Nicolas, said the region fears that, as a consequence of the continued publication by the European press of Muhammad's cartoons, the situation may turn into 'a snowball.'..."

13. EDITORIALS

- "Seeking a Negotiated Solution with Iran"

An editorial in centrist, leading "Clarín" reads (02/08) "The crisis sparked by Iran's nuclear program is a new test for the responsibility of governments and international diplomacy.

".... By taking for granted that the goal of Iran's program is to obtain nuclear weapons, the USG has undertaken a belligerent position.

".... We are now facing a new scenario of confrontation in which dangerous components such as the Middle East conflict, Islam's attacks against the Western world and the nuclear arms race are involved.

".... Hopefully, the most negotiating positions will prevail over belligerence and eventual nuclear proliferation programs that might take a very serious toll on the entire world...."

14. To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at: <http://www.state.sqov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

The Media Reaction Report reflects articles and opinions by the cited news media and do not necessarily reflect U.S. Embassy policy or views. The Public Affairs Section does not independently verify information. The report is intended for internal U.S. Government use only.

GUTIERREZ